

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Natural Resource Commission**

**#14**

**Decision Item**

**Chapter 91, “Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons” – Notice of Intended Action**

The Commission is requested to approve the Notice of Intended Action – Chapter 91, “Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons.” The Department has initiated Executive Order 71 prior to submitting the Notice of Intended Action.

**Basic Intent of Rule:** This chapter contains the regulations for hunting waterfowl and coot and includes season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, and areas open to hunting.

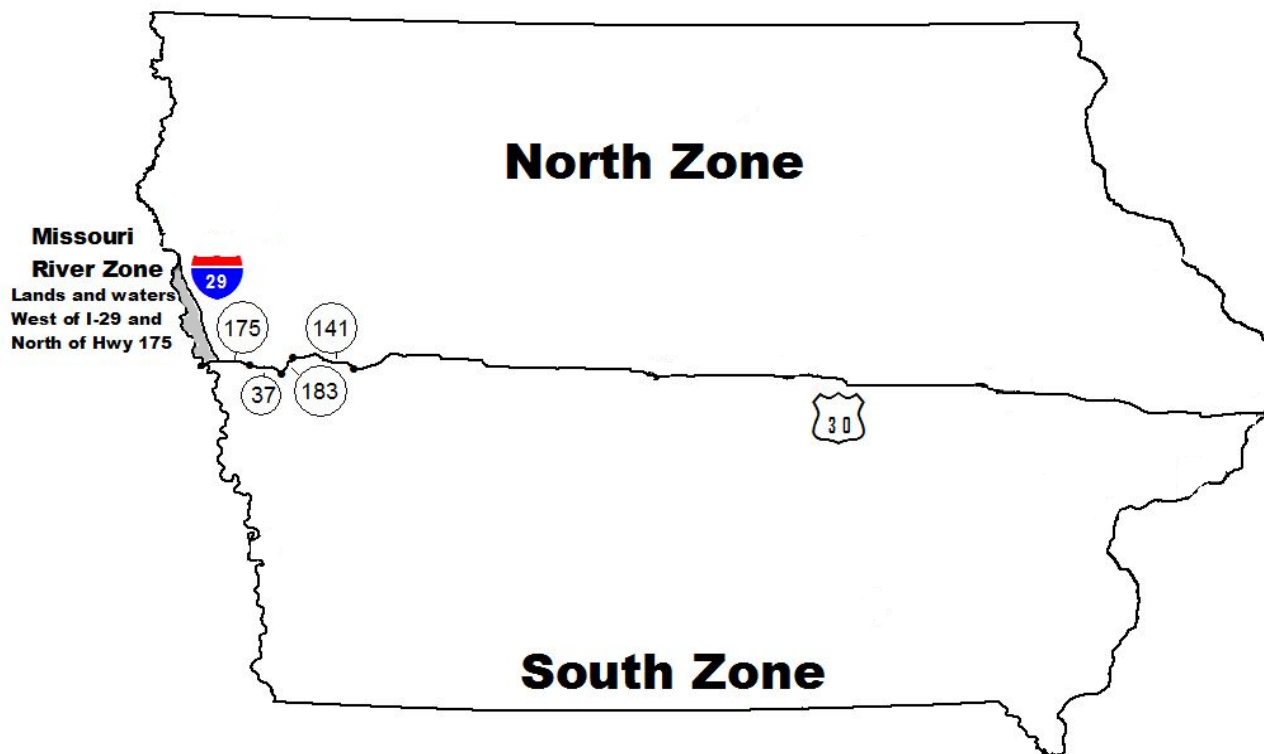
**Proposed Rule Change:** The proposed notice adjusts the season dates to comply with United States Fish and Wildlife Service regulations and to ensure the seasons begin on weekends. The Notice, also, expands the Missouri River Zone south along I-29 to the Missouri border; the North and South Zones will otherwise remain the same. Also included is a third year of the experimental special September teal season; the teal season in the North and South zones has been reduced to 9 days while the Missouri River Zone remains at 16. Finally, the Canada goose season was adjusted to include a split (closed period) in all three zones to extend the goose season later into January and, as in the recent past, nine days of Iowa’s 107-day Canada goose season will be used to open special September Canada goose seasons in zones around Des Moines, Cedar Rapids/Iowa City, and Cedar Falls/Waterloo.

Iowa must submit any changes to waterfowl hunting zones to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by May 1, 2016. These changes will be implemented for the 2017 season through the 2020 hunting season.

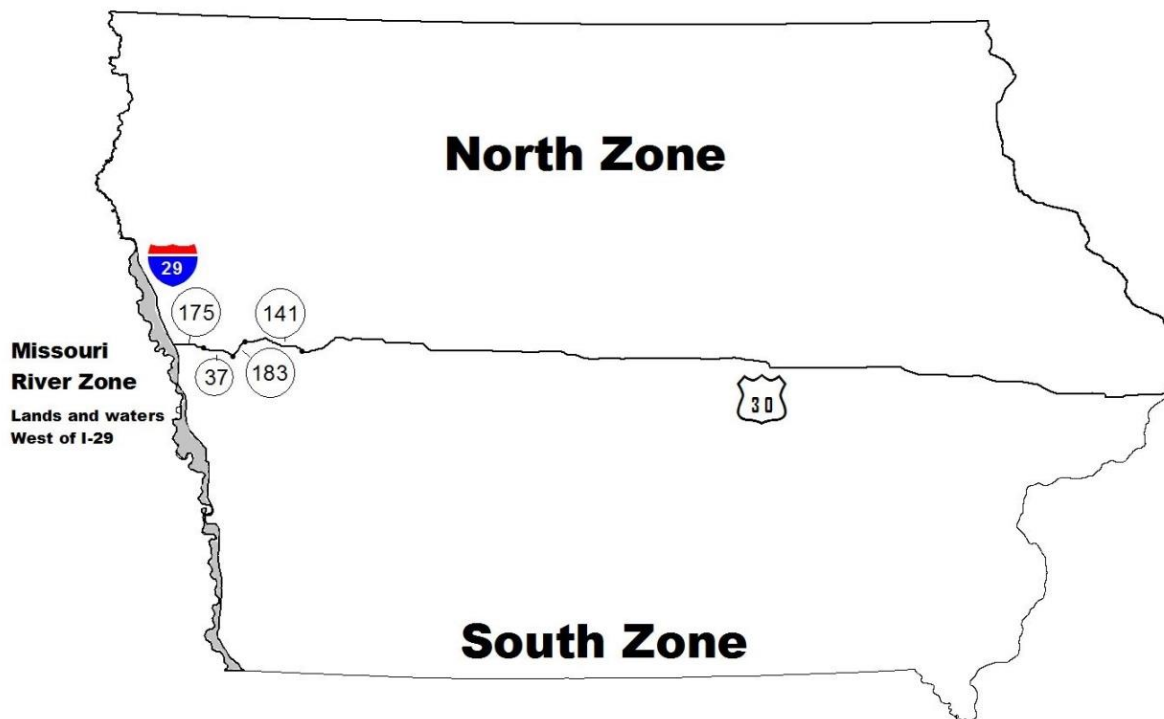
**2016-2017 MIGRATORY GAME BIRD SEASONS**

	NORTH ZONE	SOUTH ZONE	MO RIVER ZONE
Special September teal	09/03/16 - 09/11/16	09/03/16 - 09/11/16	09/03/16 - 09/18/16
Ducks, Mergansers and Coots	09/24/16 - 10/02/16 10/15/16 - 12/04/16	10/01/16 - 10/05/16 10/22/16 - 12/15/16	10/08/16 - 10/09/16 10/22/16 - 12/18/16
Youth Waterfowl Hunting Days	09/17/16 - 09/18/16	09/24/16 - 09/25/16	10/01/16 - 10/02/16
Dark geese (Canada geese, brant, and white-fronted geese)	09/24/16 - 10/09/16 10/15/16 - 01/04/17	10/01/16 - 10/16/16 10/22/16 - 01/11/17	10/08/16 - 10/16/16 10/22/16 - 01/18/17
Light Geese (white and blue phase snow geese and Ross’ geese)	09/24/16 - 10/09/16 10/15/16 - 01/13/17	10/01/16 - 10/16/16 10/22/16 - 01/18/17	10/08/16 - 10/16/16 10/22/16 - 01/18/17
SPECIAL SEPTEMBER CANADA GOOSE SEASONS			
Canada geese	09/03/16 – 09/11/16 Only in designated zones around Des Moines, Cedar Rapids/Iowa City and Cedar Falls/Waterloo.		
STATEWIDE			
Light Geese Conservation Order (white and blue phase snow geese and Ross’ geese)	01/19/17 – 04/15/17 Additional regulations apply		

## Current waterfowl zone structure 2012-2016



## Proposed waterfowl zone structure for 2017-2021



Dr. Dale Garner, Wildlife Bureau Chief  
Conservation and Recreation Division  
January 20, 2016

## NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

### Notice of Intended Action

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code sections 455A.5(6), 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48, the Natural Resource Commission (Commission) hereby gives Notice of Intended Action to amend Chapter 91, "Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons," Iowa Administrative Code.

Chapter 91 contains the regulations for hunting waterfowl and coot, and includes season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, and areas open to hunting. The proposed amendments adjust the season dates to comply with what the Department of Natural Resources (Department) anticipates the 2016-2017 federal regulations will be, based upon meetings with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) this year at the Mississippi Flyway Council and review of the proposed regulations contained in 80 Fed. Reg. 77,088-77,122 (Dec. 11, 2015). The proposed amendments also ensure the seasons open on different weekends and continue for the third year an experimental special September teal season (all species). The federal regulations will likely authorize up to sixteen days for the special teal season, but in response to hunter feedback requesting ducks have a two-week period of calm and hunter inactivity between the teal and regular duck seasons, the Commission is proposing a nine-day teal season in the North and South zones, and a sixteen-day teal season in the Missouri River zone. This will provide ducks a respite after the teal season while still staggering opening and closing dates in each zone.

Additionally, every five years the USFWS allows states to make changes to their waterfowl hunting zone boundaries. Iowa's changes must be submitted no later than May 1, 2016, and shall be implemented in the fall 2017 season and last through the spring of 2021. The proposed amendments expand the existing Missouri River zone south along I-29 to the Missouri border. Except for this southern expansion, the North and South zones otherwise remain the same. Because of the need to have the expanded Missouri River zone codified in Iowa rule by May 1, 2016, the Commission must begin the rule making process now, rather than wait until USFWS finalizes its regulations.

After analysis and review of this rule making, there will not be an impact on jobs in the state.

Any interested person may make written suggestions or comments on the proposed amendments on or before March 8, 2016. Written comments may be directed to Orrin Jones, Wildlife Biologist, Department of Natural Resources, Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife Station, 1203 N. Shore Dr., Clear Lake, IA 50428, or by e-mail at [Orrin.Jones@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Orrin.Jones@dnr.iowa.gov). Persons who wish to convey their comments orally may contact Mr. Jones by telephone at 641-357-3517 or by visiting the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife Station, located at 1203 N. Shore Dr., Clear Lake, IA 50428.

There will be a public hearing on March 8, 2016, at 2 p.m. in the Third Floor Conference Room of the Wallace State Office Building. At the public hearing, persons may present their views either orally or in writing. Participants will be asked to give their names and addresses for the record and to confine their remarks to the subject of the amendments.

Any persons who intend to attend the public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact the Department and request specific accommodations.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48.

The following amendments are proposed.

**ITEM 1.** Amend subrules **91.1(1) through 91.1(4)** as follows:

**91.1(1) Zone boundaries.** ~~The~~ Effective fall 2017 through spring 2021, the north duck hunting zone is that part of Iowa north of a line beginning on the South Dakota-Iowa border at Interstate 29, southeast along Interstate 29 to State Highway 175, east to State Highway 37, southeast to State Highway 183, northeast to State Highway 141, east to U.S. Highway 30, and along U.S. Highway 30 to the Iowa-Illinois border. The Missouri River duck hunting zone is that part of Iowa west of Interstate 29 and north of State Highway 175 south to the Iowa-Missouri border. The south duck hunting zone is the remainder of the state.

**91.1(2) Season dates - north zone.** Special September teal season: September 5 3 through September 20 11. For all ducks: ~~October 3~~ September 24 through October 18 2 and October 24 15 through December 6 4.

**91.1(3) Season dates - south zone.** Special September teal season: September 5 3 through September 20 11. For all ducks: October 3 1 through October 7 5 and October 17 22 through December 10 15.

**91.1(4) Season dates - Missouri River zone.** Special September teal season: September 5 3 through September 20 18. For all ducks: October 3 8 through October 7 9 and October 24 22 through December 17 18.

**ITEM 2.** Amend subrules **91.3(1) through 91.3(5)** as follows:

**91.3(1) Zone boundaries.** ~~The~~ Effective fall 2017 through spring 2021, the north goose hunting zone is that part of Iowa north of a line beginning on the South Dakota-Iowa border at Interstate 29, southeast along

Interstate 29 to State Highway 175, east to State Highway 37, southeast to State Highway 183, northeast to State Highway 141, east to U.S. Highway 30, and along U.S. Highway 30 to the Iowa-Illinois border. The Missouri River goose hunting zone is that part of Iowa west of Interstate 29 and ~~north of State Highway 175~~ south to the Iowa-Missouri border. The south goose hunting zone is the remainder of the state.

**91.3(2) Season dates - north zone.** Dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, brant and any other geese that are not light geese): September ~~26~~ 24 through October 9 and October 15 through January 4, ~~2016~~ 2017. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): September ~~26~~ 24 through October 9 and October 15 through January 10, ~~2016~~ 2017.

**91.3(3) Season dates - south zone.** Dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, brant and any other geese that are not light geese): October ~~3~~ 1 through October 16 and October 22 through January 8, ~~2016~~ 2017. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): October ~~3~~ 1 through October 16 and October 22 through January 15, ~~2016~~ 2017.

**91.3(4) Season dates - Missouri River zone.** Dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, brant and any other geese that are not light geese): October ~~10~~ 8 through October 16 and October 22 through January 15, ~~2016~~ 2017. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): October ~~10~~ 8 through October 16 and October 22 through January 15, ~~2016~~ 2017.

**91.3(5) Bag limit.** The daily bag limit for dark geese (Canada geese, white-fronted geese, brant and any other geese that are not light geese) is 5 and may include no more than 2 Canada geese from September ~~26~~ 24 through October 31 and no more than 3 Canada geese from November 1 through the end of the season. The daily bag limit for light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese) is 20.

**ITEM 3.** Amend subrules **91.3(8) through 91.3(11)** as follows:

**91.3(8) Light goose conservation order season.** Only light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese) may be taken under a conservation order from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from January ~~16~~, ~~2016~~ 19, 2017, through April 15, ~~2016~~ 2017.

a. to e. No change.

**91.3(9) Cedar Rapids/Iowa City goose hunting zone.**

a. Season dates. September ~~5~~ 3 through September ~~13~~ 11.

b. to d. No change.

**91.3(10) Des Moines goose hunting zone.**

a. Season dates. September ~~5~~ 3 through September ~~13~~ 11.

b. to d. No change.

**91.3(11) Cedar Falls/Waterloo goose hunting zone.**

a. Season dates. September ~~5~~ 3 through September ~~13~~ 11.

b. to d. No change.

**ITEM 4.** Amend rule **571--91.6(481A)** as follows:

**571--91.6(481A) Youth waterfowl hunt.** A special youth waterfowl hunt will be held on September ~~26~~ 17 and 27 18 in the north duck hunting zone, ~~October 10~~ September 24 and ~~11~~ 25 in the south duck hunting zone, and October ~~17~~ 1 and ~~18~~ 2 in the Missouri River duck hunting zone. Youth hunters must be residents of Iowa as defined in Iowa Code section 483A.1A and less than 16 years old. Each youth hunter must be accompanied by an adult 18 years old or older. The youth hunter does not need to have a hunting license or stamps. The adult must have a valid hunting license and habitat stamp if normally required to have them to hunt and a state waterfowl stamp. Only the youth hunter may shoot ducks and coots. The adult may hunt for any other game birds for which the season is open. The daily bag and possession limits are the same as for the regular waterfowl season, as defined in rule 571—91.1(481A). All other hunting regulations in effect for the regular waterfowl season apply to the youth hunt.

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Date

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Chuck Gipp, Director